

Alcohol Abuse & Enabling

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What kind of person develops alcoholism?

Life-style related illness

Everybody is born with a set trigger level, or the point at which they will develop alcoholism

Our choices influence our trigger level to determine whether we will develop an alcohol lifestyle related illness

Alcoholism runs in families, is it genetic or environmental?

- Adoption research has been done in Denmark, Sweden, and the United States. In the first group, infants born into a family where one or both parents were alcoholics were adopted into families where neither parents were alcoholics. These children had a four times greater chance of developing alcoholism than those who did not have a biological history of alcoholism. Children who had birth parents without alcoholism but were adopted into homes with an alcoholism parent had the same rate of alcoholism as those adopted into homes without an alcoholic parent. What does this research mean?

Tolerance is a risk factor

- Initial tolerance is hereditary
- Tolerance is changed based on the quantity and frequency that we drink
- Having a naturally high initial tolerance is a risk factor. Why?

- People will drink more and think they are okay. Tolerance literally "tricks" us.



- Mental impairment occurs long before physical impairment, so by the time someone with a high tolerance feels physically impaired, they may be way over the legal limit.
- What is the legal limit in the state of SC?



So how do we prevent ourselves from crossing our trigger level into illness? How do we prevent ourselves from having alcohol related incidents?

Risks you cannot change vs. Risks you can change

BODY, BRAIN, BIOLOGY + CHOICES = LEVEL OF RISK



- Do you have any family members who are high– risk drinkers?
- Do you tend to have a naturally high level of tolerance?

- Do you hang out with people who are high-risk drinkers?
- Do you prefer to go out to bars and other places where high-risk drinking is taking place?
- Do you regularly drink until impairment?
- Are you a sensation-seeking person? Are you gregarious, impulsive, or rebellious?

Levels of Risk

A standard drink is....

1 12 oz beer  = 1 5 oz glass of wine  = 1 1.5 oz shot 

No Risk

- 0 Standard drinks per day
  (Abstinence)

Low Risk

- No more than 3 standard on any one given day
- No more than 2 drinks daily
- No more than 1 standard drink per hour

High Risk

- Drinking more than the single-day or weekly amounts
- 1 in 4 people who drink this much meet the criteria for alcohol abuse
- Chances of having an alcohol use disorder:

~ 1 time/month= 20% chance

~ 1 time/week= 33% chance

~ 2 times/week= 50% chance



Alcohol Abuse Defined

- Any use of alcohol that adversely affects individual performance, debilitates physical or mental health, interferes with financial responsibilities, leads to the violation of military regulations, or civil laws, or contributes to disorderly conduct.
- Binge drinking is drinking until impairment

lcohol Misuse is a Problem: A Cultural Battle

- 24th Executive Force Preservation Board (EFPB) identified alcohol is the “common denominator” across spectrum of behavioral health problems, e.g. Sexual assault, Suicide (Feb 2011)



Alcohol "Hub of the Wheel"

80% of individuals with TBI met criteria for alcohol abuse and dependence

30% of spouse abuse involved alcohol

18% had evidence of alcohol

use at the time of death

24% had evidence of past alcohol abuse or dependence diagnosis

Over 50% of victims and offenders of sexual assault were associated with alcohol

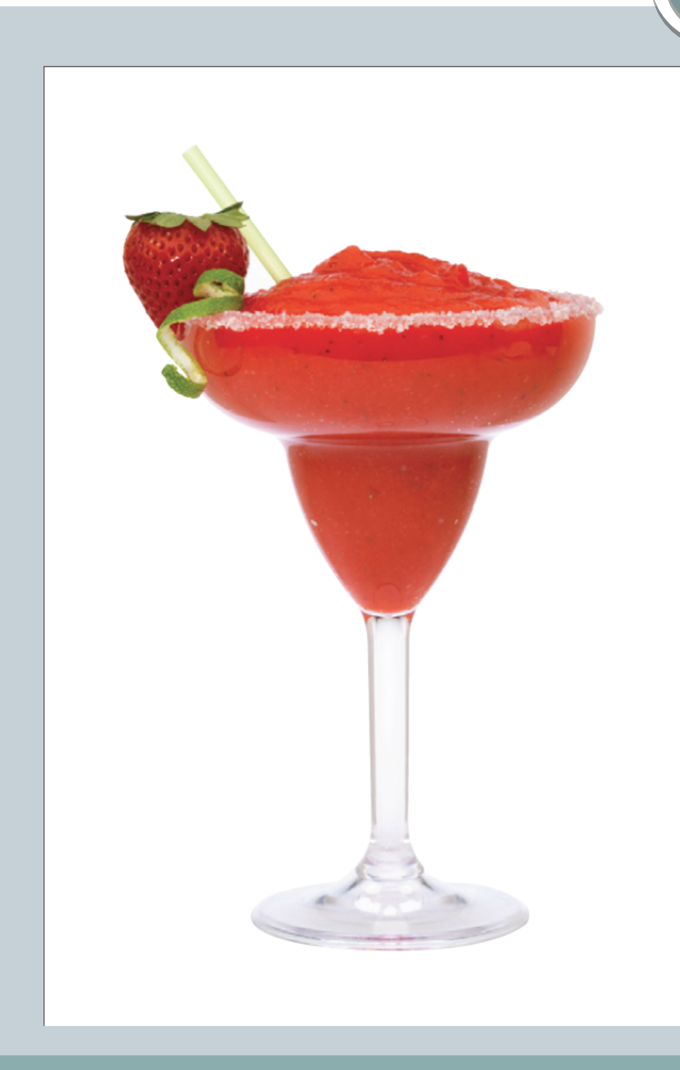
Data from internal Marine Corps Behavioral Health Program statistics: TBI data from RAND (2008)



Drinking Game

HOW MANY STANDARD DRINKS?

How many standard drinks?





How many standard drinks?



How many standard drinks?





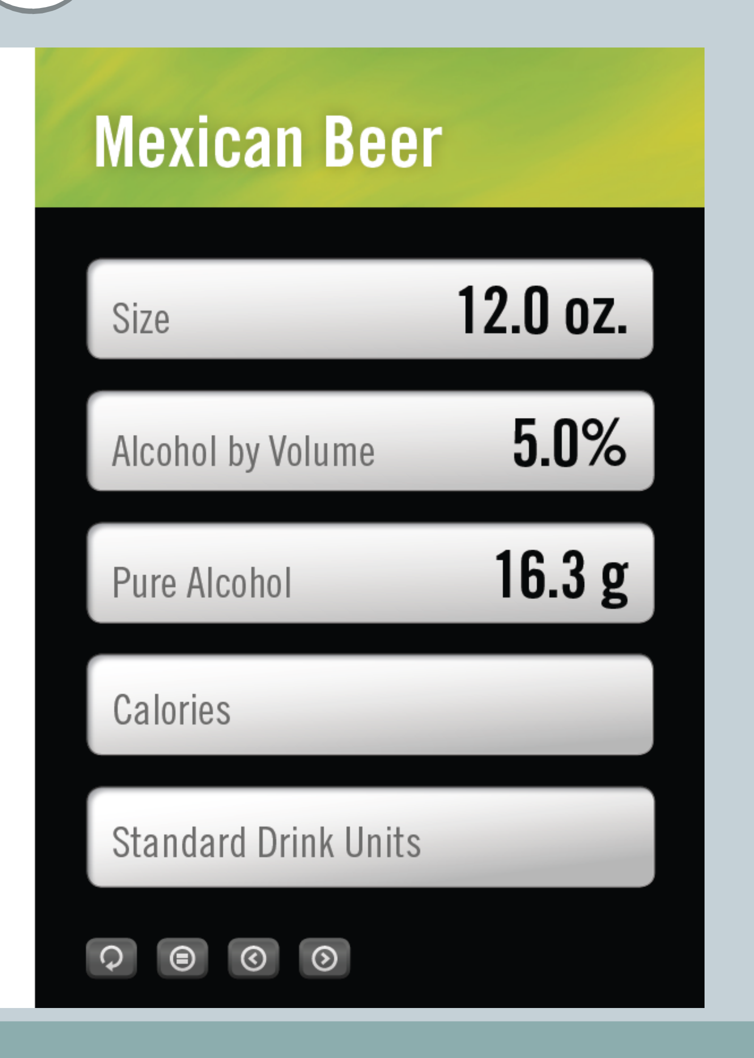
How many standard drinks?





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How many standard drinks?





How many standard drinks?







Resources

- Rebecca Landon: 228-2489

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- SAC: 228-3523
- Military One Source: www.militaryonesource.com
- AA's Vigilant Vets: www.aa-intergroup.org
- DSTRESS: www.dstressline.com or 877.476.7734